

Managed Care Innovations Continues Partnership With OWC

The Department of Human Resource Management has awarded a new five-year contract to Managed Care Innovations (MCI) as the claims and cost-containment provider for the Office of Workers' Compensation.

MCI was awarded the initial contract in 1998 when the public-private partnership was formed to outsource the workers' compensation program. During the term of the contract that expired June 30, more than \$45 million was saved in workers' compensation expenses.

The new contract provides expanded services and programs for injured workers and state agencies. Here are selected highlights:

Road Show

Six regional meetings will be held in late July and early August to discuss key features of the new contract and how these changes will affect our client agencies' interaction with our Program.

The regional "Road Show" meetings will take place in the following locations and dates. Each program runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- Richmond J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College (July 30 and Aug. 5);
- Abingdon Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center (via video conference July 22);
- Fairfax George Mason University (July 15);
- Lexington Virginia Military Institute (July 16);
- Newport News Christopher Newport University (Aug. 7).

Representatives from agencies or locations are urged to attend one of the informational meetings. For more information on registration, please contact Pamela Goetz at (804) 786-0368 or by email at pgoetz@dhrm.state.va.us.

PPO (Preferred Provider Organization)

An important service provider change in the upcoming claims administration and cost containment contract is a new PPO network with associated negotiated discounts for services. The FOCUS Premier PPO Network in the Commonwealth of Virginia consists of 59 hospitals, 2,428 primary care physicians, 10,078 specialists and 748 ancillaries.

The network can be used to assist agencies in constructing a panel of physicians, but should not be considered a state sanctioned or approved list of panel providers. The PPO is a resource that may result in savings to the Commonwealth on an agency's workers' compensation claims. However, changes to a panel of physicians are not required. It is extremely important that the selected panel understand the agency's work environment and return-to-work program. Please balance any expected medical payment savings with the agency's business needs.

The FOCUS Premier PPO directory will be available on the web after July 1 at www.dhrm.state.va.us or www.COVWC.com by clicking on the tab PPO NETWORK. The PPO site provides addresses, times of operation and maps with detailed directions. The Panel Physician Form can be completed by clicking the tab PANEL FORM.

Development of an agency-specific panel of three physicians may assist an injured worker in a timely return to work. Those who do not currently have a panel or wish to evaluate an existing panel for modification, should consider the following:

- A valid panel under the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act consists of at least three physicians, independent of each others' practice;
- The panel physicians must be located within a reasonable distance from the injured workers' residence (35 miles can be used as a general rule of thumb, however, each case differs depending upon the specifics involved, such as the employee's limitations, the physician's specialty and the availability of physicians in the area);
- Physicians must be willing to see injured workers;
- Existing panel physicians' knowledge of job descriptions and the return-to-work policy may be well-established and have a known return-to-work success rate; and,
- The negotiated discounts for services provided by physicians in the FOCUS Premier PPO may positively affect premium costs.

Enhanced Prescription Drug Program

The Program will be using a new vendor, First Script, for the pharmacy network. First Script is a nationwide pharmacy benefit program designed specifically for workers' compensation with associated discounted drug pricing and includes over 56,000 pharmacy locations nationwide; 1,300 Virginia locations. The First Script network includes all major pharmacy chains, grocery

stores, discount stores (EPIC, Wal-Mart, Target and Costco) and many single location pharmacies.

First Script operates with the use of a generic pharmacy card. Your injured worker will present their first prescription at the pharmacy for filling and the pharmacy will check for eligibility. If there is no claim filed, the pharmacy will fill the first prescription but will verify that the claim has been accepted before allowing any refills. First Script will send cards to injured workers currently enrolled in EPIC's program and to injured workers with open lost time claims in the near future with instructions regarding enrollment in the program.

Other Changes and Enhancements to the Program

Job Club is an innovative approach to assist injured workers in their return to work efforts when more conventional approaches have failed. Job Club is a four-week curriculum in a group setting that teaches job readiness and job seeking skills. Included in the curriculum is coaching of interviewing skills and resume development and assistance with job leads with the goal of return to work with a different employer.

First Notice is a 24/7 telephonic reporting option for Employer's Accident Reports (EAR's) at 1-888-627-COV1 (2681). With this method of claim reporting, the agency calls a toll-free number and reports the accident to First Notice. First Notice will complete an EAR, fax a copy to the MCI claims staff and mail the original brown form to the agency for signature. The agency will sign and then forward the original form to the claims staff for processing. Agencies should be aware that use of this service will generate a charge that will be applied to the claim file.

Program support services enhancements include Med Focus MRI services, VerNova functional capacity exams, Advantage Surveillance investigation services, Crawford & Co. field investigation services and PMSI durable medical equipment, translation services, transportation services and prescription home delivery.

Staffing changes include a new medical only unit and supervisor, a clerical unit and supervisor; a dedicated on-site Loss Control Manager; a full-time, dedicated Medical and Vocational Rehabilitation Manager; an additional telephonic Nurse Case Manager; an additional field case manager and a dedicated Account Manager.

Anticipated Cost Savings under this new contract are expected to be at a minimum of \$10 million per year.



Virginia's Workers' Compensation Program Wins National Recognition For Innovation

The Office of Workers' Compensation in the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management received one of eight national "Innovation in Government" awards from the Council of State Governments for its record of saving money and speeding the return to work of injured workers.

The public-private partnership has resulted in more than \$45 million in savings over the last three years and a 32 percent reduction in lost-time claims by state employees.

According to the award-winning submission, "The initiative has resulted in a cultural shift in the way workers' compensation claims are viewed: Work is health and under the new program injured workers are provided a range of tools – enhanced communication about benefits, additional training, quality care and workplace safety and risk reduction to accelerate their return to work."

Details of the program were featured in "Governing" magazine.

"This is not just a cost-containment program," said Sara R. Wilson, DHRM director. "Through this effort, state agencies are creating safer work environments that see fewer injured workers and get injured workers back on the job more quickly."

Rather than lumping together all state agencies to calculate workers' compensation premiums, Virginia now uses an experienced-based premium assessment model in which separate premiums are calculated for each agency based on the number and size of the claims it files. Agencies that reduce premiums keep 25 percent of the savings for future-loss control initiatives.

Sue Keener, OWC Director, said the incentive-based approach "encourages state agencies to work smarter so they can experience direct savings for their agency."

The money saved on workers' compensation claims comes despite evermounting increases in medical costs. In each of the three previous years, workers' compensation payments were below estimates, with the 2001 total \$13 million lower than anticipated.



New Loss Control Manager Sees Improvement In Worker Attitudes Toward Safety



Guy Butts, II

News about construction accidents and other breeches of safety rules tends to reinforce safety consciousness among workers, the new Loss Control Manager for the Office of Workers' Compensation believes.

Guy Butts, II, who is an employee of MCI, the general contractor for the Office of Workers' Compensation program, has seen worker attitudes toward safety go from "Leave me alone, I've got work to do" to a point where "accidents aren't acceptable any more."

"Nowadays, more people pay attention to safety rather than fight it," Mr. Butts continued. "As a society, there's been a behavioral change."

Mr. Butts is a graduate of Michigan

State University, with a background in construction and management. While serving as national safety director for a construction firm, he was appointed as an OSHA Commissioner for the state of Michigan. The non-paying position helped set safety rules and regulations for general industry in the state.

Mr. Butts is a certified safety professional, a certified hazardous materials manager – master level, a certified safety specialist from the World Safety Organization, is completing an associate's degree in risk management from the Insurance Institute of America and is a certified American Red Cross instructor.

Safety awareness "has come a long way in the last 20 years," he said. "Workers are a lot more responsible [about safety issues] and know what they have to do. From small businesses to large organizations, safety has become ingrained in the culture of management."



OWC Offers Training On Variety Of Subjects

The Office of Workers Compensation is offering free training to state agencies on a range of subjects through the end of 2003. What follows is a comprehensive list of courses, times and locations.

Accident Investigation

\$50 for Local Government - **Free to State Government**

**Failure to attend class or cancel registration at least 10 business days prior tothe class will result in a \$50 charge to the agency.

This course is designed to help agency representatives conduct thorough accident investigations and appropriately document the results. We will cover the basic analysis of accident data contained in the OSHA 300 log and the Employers' Accident Report. Topics include: types of accidents, when and how to conduct an audit, interviewing techniques, methods of data analysis (including trend analysis), lost workday index, and accident rates. *Credit for this course counts toward the HRI*.

Who should attend: HR Managers and Staff; Safety and Risk Managers; Safety and Health Coordinators; Managers and Supervisors

Oct. 21 1:30 - 4:30 p.m. Richmond - PDS Training Center

Administering Your Workers' Compensation Benefits: Do You Know What's Covered?

\$50 for Local Government – **Free to State Government**

**Failure to attend class or cancel registration at least 10 business days prior to the class will result in a \$50 charge to the agency.

This course is for managers, supervisors, and others who administer their agency's Workers' Compensation benefits. Emphasis is placed on notification requirements, employer's responsibilities, how to complete and submit Workers' Compensation required documents, establishing your agency's attending physician panels, Workers' Compensation decisions, as well as your agency requirements under Executive Order 52 (99). This seminar will also discuss the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act and its areas of coverage: injuries by accident, occupational diseases and ordinary diseases of life. *Credit for this course counts toward the HRI*.

Who should attend: HR Managers and Staff; Safety and Risk Managers; Safety and Health Coordinators; Workers' Compensation Representatives

Oct. 7 1-4 p.m. Blacksburg - Virginia Tech

Advanced Workers' Compensation

\$50 for Local Government - **Free to State Government**

**Failure to attend class or cancel registration at least 10 business days prior to the class will result in a \$50 charge to the agency.

This course is for human resource professionals who administer their agency's Workers' Compensation benefits. The course goes beyond the basics of workers' compensation handling. Topics include a discussion of significant case law, the litigation process, program settlement process and philosophy, and the ADA, FMLA and Workers' Compensation connection.

Who should attend: HR Managers and Staff; Safety and Risk Managers; Safety and Health Coordinators; Workers' Compensation Representatives

Nov. 6 9 a.m. - Noon Richmond - PDS Training Center

Nov. 13 9 a.m. - Noon Blacksburg - Virginia Tech

Confined Space Awareness

\$50 for Local Government - **Free to State Government**

**Failure to attend class or cancel registration at least 10 business days prior to the class will result in a \$50 charge to the agency.

This course is designed to educate employees on the hazards and controls associated with confined spaces. The course will cover the characteristics that constitute a confined space, requirements for safe entry into a confined space, rescue requirements and other potential hazards that exist around confined spaces.

Who should attend: Safety and Risk Managers, Safety and Health Coordinators, and employees exposed to confines spaces, Supervisors and Management Staff

Aug. 5 9 a.m. - Noon Marion - SW Virginia Mental Health Institute

Nov. 20 9 a.m. - Noon Blacksburg - Virginia Tech

Intermediate Workers' Compensation

\$50 for Local Government – **Free to State Government**

**Failure to attend class or cancel registration at least 10 business days prior to the class will result in a \$50 charge to the agency.

This course is designed to provide hands on training to HR representatives responsible for the day to day handling of workers' compensation claims. Actual mock cases will be discussed, forms will be completed, and complete case studies will be presented.

Who should attend: Workers' Compensation representatives, HR Managers and Staff.

Sept. 25 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Blacksburg - Virginia Tech

Oct. 28 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Richmond - PDS Training Center

Introduction to Workers' Compensation/New Workers' Compensation Representative Orientation

\$50 for Local Government - **Free to State Government**

**Failure to attend class or cancel registration at least 10 business days prior to the class will result in a \$50 charge to the agency.

This full day course is designed to provide all the basics necessary for an agency to handle their Workers' Compensation claims. Time will be spent discussing policies and laws that impact how an agency administers their program. Topics include Workers' Compensation leave policies, Workers' Compensation Act, FMLA and Workers' Compensation, coordination of benefits and leave with the VSDP program. Time will be available to meet staff responsible for your agency's claims administration. *Credit for this course counts toward the HRI*.

Who should attend: HR Managers and Staff; Workers' Compensation Coordinators

Sept. 30	9 a.m. – 4 p.m.	Richmond - PDS Training Center
Nov. 18	9 a.m. – 4 p.m.	Richmond - PDS Training Center

Material Handling

\$50 for Local Government – **Free to State Government**

**Failure to attend class or cancel registration at least 10 business days prior to the class will result in a \$50 charge to the agency.

Material handling is one of the leading causes of employee injury for the Commonwealth of Virginia. This course is designed to educate employees on the proper lifting techniques in order to avoid back and shoulder injuries. This course will cover risk factors for back injuries, proper lifting techniques, and exercises to strengthen the back.

Who should attend: Safety and Risk Managers, Safety and Health Coordinators, Managers and Supervisors and Employees required to conduct material handling.

July 15	9 a.m Noon	Blacksburg - Virginia Tech
July 22	9 a.m Noon	Charlottesville - University of Virginia
Sept. 9	9 a.m Noon	Petersburg - Southside VA Training Center
Sept. 10	9 a.m Noon	Staunton - Frontier Culture Museum
Nov. 13	9 a.m Noon	Bon Air - Dept of Juvenile Justice/Cedar Lodge
Dec. 2	9 a.m Noon	Lynchburg - Central Virginia Training Center

New Safety Officer Training

\$50 for Local Government - **Free to State Government**

**Failure to attend class or cancel registration at least 10 business days prior to the class will result in a \$50 charge to the agency.

This full day course is designed to provide all the basic skill training needed by agency personnel newly assigned to the duties of Agency Safety Officer. Topics included will be the basics of safety, an introduction to the OSHA Act and how it affects state agencies, how to set priorities and goals using trend analysis, conducting safety audits, and accident investigations.

Who should attend: Newly appointed Safety Officers, Safety Officers that want to increase their knowledge, and supervisors of Safety Officers, as well as any agency representative with responsibility for safety.

Oct. 2 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Blacksburg - Virginia Tech

OSHA General Industry Outreach - 10 Hour \$150 for Local Government – **Free to State Government**

**Failure to attend class or cancel registration at least 10 business days prior to the class will result in a \$50 charge to the agency.

This one-and-a-half-day course provides a short version of the national curriculum developed by the OSHA training institute. Topics vary, depending on the needs of the attendees, but will include: OSHA compliance and recordkeeping, personal protective equipment, hazcom, and emergency preparedness.

Who should attend: HR Managers and Staff; Safety & Risk Managers; Facility Safety & Health Coordinators

Aug. 28-29 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Aug. 28) Blacksburg - Virginia Tech 9 a.m. – Noon (Aug. 29)

OSHA General Industry Outreach - 30 Hour \$450 for Local Government - **Free to State Government**

**Failure to attend class or cancel registration at least 10 business days prior to the class will result in a \$50 charge to the agency.

This course is based upon a national curriculum developed by the US Department of Labor – OSHA and specially adapted for the needs of employees of the Commonwealth of Virginia. It is a 30-hour course that will be offered over a 4 ½ day period. Emphasis will be placed on learning how to read, understand, and implement OSHA requirements at the agency level. Topics range from a discussion of how the Virginia OSHA program (VOSH) regulates state agencies to technical topics of interest in a variety of work situations. Attendees will also receive a copy of the OSHA General Industry Standards.

Who should attend: Safety Managers; Industrial Hygienists; Safety and Health Coordinators; HR Managers and Staff

Oct. 27-31 9 a.m.- 5 p.m. M-Th Blacksburg - Virginia Tech 9a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Fr

Risk Control Strategies and Data Analysis

\$50 for Local Government - **Free to State Government**

**Failure to attend class or cancel registration at least 10 business days prior to the class will result in a \$50 charge to the agency.

This class is designed to help you analyze past Workers' Compensation claims to determine trends and possible loss cause factors. The class will discuss where to get data, how to organize it, and how to analyze it for meaningful information. Data analysis will help you identify potential risk control strategies to reduce the frequency or severity of worker injuries. *Credit for this course counts toward the HRI*.

Who should attend: HR Managers and Staff; Safety and Risk Managers; Safety Officers, and Workers' Compensation Coordinators

Aug. 12 9 a.m. - Noon Richmond - PDS Training Center

Safety Issues in Return to Work

\$50 for Local Government - **Free to State Government**

**Failure to attend class or cancel registration at least 10 business days prior to the class will result in a \$50 charge to the agency.

When an employee sustains a work-related injury or illness, each agency is attempting to bring that employee back to work in a safe, timely manner. Some employees are returning to their pre-injury position and some are returning to transitional duty for a short period of time. This course will explore how you should involve your safety personnel step-by-step in the return to work process. It will also discuss what you should do if your agency does not have safety personnel. Return-to-work should not impede the employee's recovery. However, if the environment is causing an exacerbation of the pre-existing injury or causing new injuries, your employees' rehabilitation will be impacted. Ergonomic issues, safety issues, etc. will be explored in the return-to-work process.

Who should attend: This course is designed for safety personnel who want to become involved in their agency's return-to-work process. It is also designed for HR Managers, Staff, and Immediate Supervisors who do not have a safety position.

Aug. 20 9 a.m. - Noon Richmond - PDS Training Center

Sept. 24 9 a.m. - Noon Blacksburg - Virginia Tech

Slips, Trips, Falls Prevention

\$50 for Local Government – **Free to State Government**

**Failure to attend class or cancel registration at least 10 business days prior to the class will result in a \$50 charge to the agency.

Slips, trips and falls injuries are one of the leading causes of employee injury for the Commonwealth of Virginia. This course is designed to educate employees on the prevention of injuries associated with slips, trips and falls. This course will define the difference between a slip, trip and fall, risk factors associated with each group, prevention techniques and ladder safety.

Who should attend: Safety and Risk Manager, Safety and Health Coordinators, Managers and Supervisors and Employees

July 22	1 - 4 p.m.	Charlottesville - University of Virginia
Aug. 7	1:30 - 4:30 p.m.	Richmond - PDS Training Center
Sept. 18	9 a.m Noon	Petersburg - Southside VA Training Center
Nov. 13	1 - 4 p.m.	Bon Air - Dept of Juvenile Justice/Cedar Lodge
Dec. 11	9 a.m Noon	Lynchburg - Central Virginia Training Center

VSDP/Workers' Compensation Basics

\$50 for Local Government - **Free to State Government**

**Failure to attend class or cancel registration at least 10 business days prior to the class will result in a \$50 charge to the agency.

This course is designed to go over the basic benefits provided under VSDP (work-related disability) and Workers' Compensation. Topics covered will include VSDP and WORKERS' COMPENSATION coverage, benefits, overlaps, calculations, programs communication requirements, the roles and responsibilities of the employee, human resource departments, VSDP, and Workers' Compensation. *Credit for this course counts toward the HRI.*

Who should attend: HR Professionals - Executive to Supervisory level; Experienced Trainers, Workers' Compensation representatives, Payroll Managers and Staff

Dec. 4 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Richmond - PDS Training Center



COVWC Web Site Provides Library Of Safety-Related Articles

Whether it is "Pregnancy and Ergonomics" or learning about the dangers of 15-passenger vans, the Office of Workers' Compensation Web site at www.covwc.com contains more than 50 articles on a range of safety topics.

"In setting up the library, we wanted to provide instant access to a broad range of safety issues," said Sue Keener, OWC director. "These articles are thoroughly researched and provide the latest information on a topic at the time it's posted on the Web site."

The library will soon be indexed by subject to make information easier to find.

Here are links to the articles in the library, along with the month and year they appeared:

2003

January Emergency Action Plans	February Driving Distractions	March Workplace Violence	April Workplace Violence 2
May Accident Reduction through Good Housekeeping	June	July	August
September	October	November	December

January Winter Weather Working Conditions	February Confined Spaces: Hidden Dangers Below	March Not Just About Protecting the Eyes, Pt. 1	April Not Just About Protecting the Eyes, Pt. 2
May Accident AnalysisHidden Causes		July Latex Allergies: Are You At Risk?	August 15 Passenger Van Safety

<u>September</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>December</u>
OSHA Checklist	Fire Safety	Winter Preparedness	Buying Into Safety

January Hepatitis C Exposure Prevention	February Material Safety Data Sheet	March Reporting Catastrophic Events?	April Ergonomics Repealed
May A Summer of Infestation	June Telecommuting: Fad or the Wave of the Future?	July OSHA Revises Bloodborne Pathogen Standard	August Overhead Power Lines: Packing a Zapping Punch
September Recordkeeping Standard Update	October Workplace Violence	November Worried About Anthrax?	December Commuting in Winter Weather Conditions

January Setting Up an Effective Safety Committee	February Cold Protection	March Comfort Indoors	April Respirator Fit testing
May Fit Testing: NIOSH Standards	June Boy, Is It Hot Out There!!	July Carpal Tunnel Syndrome	August Hazard Communication in the Office
September 6 Steps to Write / Implement a Safety Program	October Pregnancy & Ergonomics	November Internet: Superhighway for Safety Resources	<u>December</u> Fighting for Worker Rights

January OSHA Respirator Standards	February Ladder Safety: One Step at a Time	March Safety Training	April Aggressive Return to Work Pt. II
May Machine Shop Hazards	June First Aid: Why be Trained?	July Hand Injuries: Get a Grip	August Safe Driver Program
September Needle Stick Protection /	October Job Safety Analysis	November Disaster Preparation	December History of OSHA Efforts

Electrical Violations		

July Sharing Values	August Sun: Occupational Hazard	September Crashes: Leading Cause of Job Fatalities	October Audits: Highlighting the Positives
November Pathogens: TB and Blood Borne	December Slips, Trips, and Falls: 4 Points of Prevention		



Annual Safety Day Draws Over 100 To Learn About Variety Of Subjects

More than 100 safety officers and others gathered in Richmond recently to attend the third annual "Safety Day" sponsored by the Office of Workers' Compensation that included presentations ranging from information relating to smallpox vaccinations to power equipment safety.

"This was an excellent way to network with the safety community within the Commonwealth," said Monica Brown, a loss control specialist with Managed Care Innovations and one of the day's presenters. "I don't think anyone who attended left feeling they hadn't learned anything."

Among the presentations was a detailed look at toxic mold by Dr. Christopher Holstege, of the University of Virginia, and a train-the-trainer talk on strain prevention.

PowerPoint presentations and other materials from this year's Safety Day will be posted soon on the Department of Human Resource Management's Web site under the Safety and Workers' Compensation tab.